



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
*1102 SE Quince Street • PO Box 47990
Olympia, Washington 98504-7990*

March 16, 2004

Roxcy L. Nielsen
5252 Highway 12
Yakima, WA 98902

Dear Ms. Nielsen,

Thank you for your letter of March 2, 2004. Our acting executive director, Craig McLaughlin, asked me to respond. As the State Board of Health policy analyst on children's health, I work on immunization issues.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the weight of currently available scientific evidence does not support the hypothesis that vaccines cause autism or ADHD. At the same time, studies show that when the numbers of children receiving vaccines goes down, more children become ill and more die from preventable diseases.

The CDC and many other research organizations around the world continue to investigate this issue. The Board will monitor all relevant studies carefully. It recognizes that there is considerable public interest in this issue and is committed to ensuring that Washington State residents receive safe, effective vaccinations. It will continue to base its decisions on the best scientific evidence available.

I have enclosed a couple of immunization articles for you from the CDC Web site. One is a fact sheet on additives in vaccines to help you familiarize yourself with those findings. Another is a brochure titled "Vaccines: A Safe Choice" that helps parents understand the risks and benefits of immunizations for children. Extensive information specifically related to vaccines and autism is available at the CDC Web sites for the National Immunization Program, <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/vacsafe/concerns/autism/default.htm>, and information about autism is available from the Autism Information Center Web site, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/aic/cdc/default.htm>. Both of these Web sites contain information about ongoing research.

I suggest that you consider contacting your local health department and family doctor for more information. The Washington State Department of Health also has a very useful Web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize/childhood.htm>.

Again, thank you for sharing your concerns with the State Board of Health. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Tara Wolff
Policy Analyst

Enclosures (2)